# HAMMER

## The Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center

HAMMER is a national hands-on training and education center designed to prepare workers and emergency responders to safely perform high-risk tasks and use new technology.

## HAMMER Milestones

- **1986** The Tri-City Industrial Development Council (TRIDEC), the local Tri-County Fire Commissioners, the Benton-Franklin Regional Council, and local labor councils begin exploring the idea of a specialized, shared emergency response training facility dedicated to saving emergency responders' lives by providing realistic training.
- **1989** DOE endorses the concept of a comprehensive hands-on training facility for Hanford workers, emergency responders, and others; a feasibility study is launched.
- **1993** Congress approves funding for the project. The first HAMMER Center is temporarily housed in Port of Benton facilities in Richland.
- **1997** The new HAMMER facility is dedicated on September 26, 1997.

**The state-of-the-art Volpentest HAMMER Training and Education Center, located in the southeast corner of the Hanford Site, is a DOE facility providing training and education programs to enhance the skills, knowledge, and abilities of workers and emergency responders who face health and safety risks in their day-to-day work. While most courses at HAMMER are attended by Hanford personnel, the center also offers specialized training for various other public and private sector agencies.**

**The HAMMER facility features world-class courses, simulations and instruction, and unique user-defined and designed training "props," including a six-story tower, a burn building, a self-contained breathing apparatus building, confined space and trench rescue props, rail cars, storage tanks, a simulated waste burial and remediation site, and an artificial pond and stream. The center's credo, "Training at HAMMER is as Real as it Gets," is especially appropriate and indicative of the realistic, hands-on training experiences available. Fluor Daniel Hanford (FDH) operates HAMMER for DOE.**

### A Year of Progress

In fiscal year 1998, the first year of operations at the new facility, HAMMER achieved significant progress in establishing itself as a state-of-the-art training center. More than 1,300 classes—and 23,000 cumulative student days—were logged during the year with zero accidents or injuries reported. Ninety percent of the cumulative student days were attributed to Hanford workforce personnel.

Hanford is expected to remain HAMMER's major customer for the next five years. In fact, HAMMER has been selected as the primary training facility for the Project Hanford Management Contract, and all Hanford hands-on training now is being conducted at HAMMER.

### Training as Real as it Gets

During the year, HAMMER hosted a wide range of courses for Hanford workers, from National Institute of Environmental Health Services programs for hazardous waste operations and respiratory training, to a variety of Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) classes. In addition, essential "radworker" training courses were provided to Hanford workers who must periodically enter radiological zones.

The National Transportation Program Regulatory Compliance Training (NTPRCT), administered through HAMMER, added six more customer-requested classes to the schedule in fiscal year 1998, increasing the total to 24. Efficiency efforts resulted in a 45 percent reduction in the costs of conducting the classes.

Also in fiscal year 1998, HAMMER was given the responsibility for coordinating the Hanford Site Emergency Management Training Program. In conjunction with FDH's Emergency Preparedness team, HAMMER has the technical lead to develop, provide, and coordinate Building Emergency Director Training, Incident Command Post Training, Building Warden Training, Drill Coordinator Training, and Joint Information Center Training.

HAMMER also was selected to manage the DOE Transportation Emergency

Preparedness Program training activities. These activities provide information and training support to local, state, and tribal agencies located along the DOE transportation corridor.

Efforts to enhance Hanford's existing knowledge base in the fields of epidemiology, toxicology, bio-statistics, hazardous waste management, and occupational medicine were realized in fiscal year 1998, as 13 students graduated from Tulane University's Master of Science in Public Health program. The program makes use of HAMMER's distance learning capabilities and is focused on developing and supplying trained industrial hygienists to the Hanford Site. HAMMER now has the equipment and expertise to provide, via distance learning, major training and education programs throughout the DOE complex.

In the law enforcement arena, HAMMER and the Hanford Patrol, in conjunction with DOE Safeguards and Security, agreed to work collaboratively to use excess capacity available at the Hanford Patrol Training Academy to drive down costs for onsite security force training. Also, in September 1998, Washington Senator Patty Murray and Representative Norm Dicks announced that funding of $5 million in fiscal year 1999 was approved for establishing a National Counter Narcotics Center at HAMMER. Plans call for the center to coordinate drug interdiction training nationwide.

The Hanford Fire Department, local mutual aid fire departments, and the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS) benefited from HAMMER's state-of-the-art training programs in 1998. City fire crews from the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska trained at the facility during the year.

## Work Begins on Test Bed

Topography mapping and surface feature placement for HAMMER's Geophysical Test Bed commenced in fiscal year 1998. The Nez Perce, Umatilla, Wanapum, and Yakama tribal nations are leading design efforts. The test bed will meet a growing cultural resources management need for training in "non-intrusive detection" (detecting subsurface features before they accidentally are excavated). The test bed will be very useful in training DOE environmental cleanup personnel to avoid undue disturbance of cultural sites.

## Border Training Yields Results

In fiscal year 1998, HAMMER hosted U.S. Customs Foreign Border Enforcement Training for customs officials from Central and Eastern Europe and former Soviet Union countries, where smuggling of nuclear materials is on the rise.

Consequently, U.S. support to non-proliferation activities within the region has increased.

The training program is being conducted in collaboration with Pacific Northwest National Laboratory, and already is paying off. In 1998, Bulgarian border enforcement officers who trained at HAMMER identified nuclear reactor parts being moved through their country. Additional countries are expected to participate in training for border enforcement officials during fiscal year 1999.

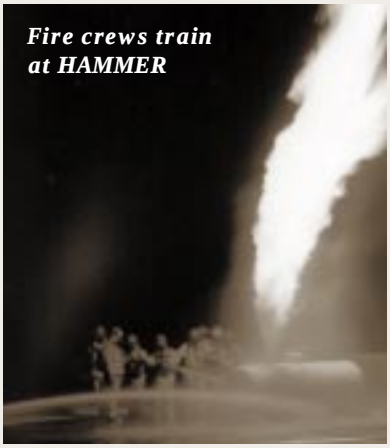
### *HAMMER's Booster: Sam Volpentest*

Sam Volpentest's faith in the HAMMER concept, bolstered by his enthusiasm and tireless efforts, helped make the HAMMER program and its new $29.9 million training facility a reality. For many years, Volpentest, who serves as executive vice president of the Tri-City Industrial Development Council, was a driving force in the HAMMER project.

In recognition of his efforts, the new HAMMER facility was formally dedicated to him in September 1997, and it now bears his name.

## *Fiscal Year 1998 Accomplishments*

- HAMMER's Cumulative Student Day Total (the total number of days students participate in classes) for the year was 23,250; Hanford workforce personnel accounted for 90 percent of the student days.
- More than 1,300 classes were offered with zero accidents or injuries reported.
- HAMMER was selected to manage DOE's National Transportation Emergency Preparedness Program and the National Transportation Program Regulatory Compliance Training (NTPRCT). In the first year of managing NTPRCT, HAMMER reduced program costs 45 percent from fiscal year 1997.
- The Hanford Fire Department, WPPSS, and city fire departments from the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, and Alaska received state-of-the-art Fire Operations training.
- HAMMER financial and contractual systems were designed and are in place to support market-driven pricing.



*Fire crews train at HAMMER*